

THE SOB WRITER ENVIES THE ARTIST IN THE COURT OF DOMESTIC RELATIONS

It was the sketch artist who gave the sob writer the idea as he sat in her usual chair in the court of domestic relations, sketching "types" and she sat below and envied him.

"Here I am," she mused, "ordered to get some humorous tale in a court where everything is running over with pathos, and I have to stick to facts. There he is, just drawing lines to make pictures and able to push one—that one there, for instance, about that woman's mouth that she got from crying every so often because her man beat her—and, presto, she has a smile of contentment as though she had just been kissed."

She pulled a wad of paper out of her muff, fished a lead pencil from the pocket of her sweater where she had put it in an idle moment, and wrote down the names of the man and woman before the bar.

"Little red-haired thing, the woman," she jotted down. "Looks like a scared rabbit. The man is huskier, but I bet when things go wrong with him he puts his head on her shoulder and cries and she tells him not to mind a bit, that things are going to come all right some day."

The sob writer paused to listen to the testimony of the policewoman and a policeman interested in the case.

"Your honor," the policewoman said to Judge Hopkins, "this case was up last week. There are seven children and the man hasn't worked for some time. The woman has been going out begging with the children. We have taken the children away from her, but one of them is down with the measles and quarantined so the case cannot be taken to the juvenile court that the children may be disposed of until the child is well. These people have been locked up since last week."

"Yes," said the policeman. "This man is no good. The woman sticks

up for him. They've been living in a basement."

"He's doin' the best he can," said the woman. "He tries to get work. I begged bread for the children, but it didn't hurt them. They are healthy looking children and my man does the best he can."

"I only want to straighten them up," said the policeman. "I would recommend that you put the man on probation and make him get a job."

The sob writer stopped listening and glared up at the sketch artist.

"He'll probably sketch her as a frail, little, sickly thing and remember what they said about her being subnormal, and maybe he'll get in her eyes that look of a child asking you to be good to it, and he'll make the man show that he puts his head on her shoulder when he's in tough luck. If I could sketch I know how I would do it," she thought.

She bit the end of her pencil and jotted down:

"She was a rosy-cheeked little thing, slender, it is true, but her face had a healthy flush that comes from life in the out-of-doors. The snow fell and snuggled into her hair and softened the flame of it, and her blue eyes glowed as though they were patches out of a warm June sky as she watched her man come up from the barn with the pail of milk on one arm and a load of kindling wood on the other arm."

"Out of the door of the farm house seven kiddies romped, fat and chunky, and they jumped about shouting 'daddy' until the man put the milk down in the shed and dropped the load of wood. Then they threw themselves in his arms, grabbed him by the knees and scrambled all over him as he put his arm about the shoulders of the tiny red-haired woman."

"'Supper's ready,' she said, with a tender smile, and they went into the